



# AMUSEMENT SECTION

## Evening Ledger

PHOTOPLAY THEATRES DANCING MUSIC

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 8, 1916

### A LITTLE THING LIKE THIS IS NOTHING



Up, up, UP goes Anita King's car when it leaps from the broken bridge in "The Race." That's easy. It's the landing that counts, as you may see just across the page.

### DIRECTOR'S VALUE IN DIRECT RATIO TO PUBLIC'S WISH

The Final Verdict on Director's Work Rests Not With Himself But His Audiences

By MARGUERITE BERTSCH

Marguerite Bertsch, the director of the Vitagraph, who produced "A Million Dollars in Debt," "My Official Wife," "Uncle Bill," "The Wreck," "The Vengeance of Durand," "Shadows of the Past," "The Pointed Toe," "The Case Man," "The Dust of Egypt" and "Salvation Joan," is now an author-producer. She tells what she thinks makes a good director.

Defining the good director should make clear what is wrong with the picture field today, or perhaps more fairly, what is wrong with those productions that are poor, mediocre, or that in other ways fall foul of success.

You see, I hold the director responsible for it all, since I do not class as directors those who merely put on a script that is given them. So often we hear a director explain a failure by saying that the manuscript from which he produced it was bad. We can understand this, but we cannot accept it as an excuse. What we must understand is that a director must be able at once to analyze it for every element of strength or weakness, of failure or success. This accomplished, he must be able to direct the material with an interest equal to their importance. They say it cannot be done. That high art and the gallery can never be reconciled. They are wrong. There is no theme so fine but it can be made to appeal to the simplest mind. Two things only are necessary, two things that make the second great requisite of the good director. He must understand and love the simple mind, even as he must understand and love the things that are fine. I know well that this is a bold statement, one for which I will be widely criticized. It does not matter. I know it can be done, just as solidly as they know it cannot be done. It requires, of course, a more exquisite knowledge of life and of human nature, a deep understanding of the recipient mind and of life's unifying truth, than most directors can bring to bear on its achievement.

The third requisite of the good director is to create character and to infuse life into the characters drawn. To do this he must be a student of life, a student of the things that are in psychology, in philosophy, in sociology, economics or even in history; these sciences give us the truth concerning that life, and I'm strong enough to take the boys' sleds away from them which is lots of fun, because it makes them so angry. You don't know how strong I am. You see, I'm crazy about Juliet, and I have been taking lessons in it for some time. Also I like to box, because then I have an excuse to wave my arms about as much as I want to.

I can manage my sister Margaret quite easily, and she is 16, but there's never any reason for demonstrating that fact. We are very different, but I don't believe we've ever had a serious quarrel, only sometimes at night, when I want the light left on to read by, and she wants it off so that she can sleep; we keep popping it on and off for hours.

I appeared first on the stage, you know, and I want to get back to it. My work before the camera is very interesting, of course, but I remain true to my first love. It is really all a matter of opinion, but to me legitimate stage work is the highest form of histrionic art. I suppose it's because I was brought up to it. But there is one thing that I should miss if I gave up my picture work, and that is in the traveling. I have come to so many places and met so many nice people, all the way from Florida to the Pacific coast, that I really have a large number of friends. The people out West are the most hospitable that I have ever met. Still, I want to go back to the stage.

The trouble is I'm too particular about parts. It is hard to find a play that suits the sort of acting I can do best, and want to do. A story like "The Littlest Rebel," in which I played with Dustin Farnum, can't be picked up every day. Margaret is cut out for comedy, but I prefer drama, but not of the gushy and sentimental kind.

### THE MOVIES THRIVE ON DISASTER



When the trick is pulled off just right and the cameramen of the Lasky forces are ready, the result may be a wrecked racer, but it is also an exciting film.

### A Dramatic Critic Criticised by an Humble Playwright

The Authoress of "The Fear Market" Disputes With Walter Prichard Eaton Over His Review of Her Play

By AMELIE RIVES

Princess Troubatkov

FAIR play is the motto of the Anglo-Saxon, and "turn about is fair play," so I venture to hope that the EVENING LEDGER, which printed on the 25th of March an article by Mr. Walter Prichard Eaton in regard to my play, "The Fear Market," will print this article by me in regard to that of Mr. Eaton.

The dramatic critics, with some notable exceptions, smote me on the right cheek, and in silence I submitted to being smitten on the left also, but Mr. Eaton's blow comes "when patience has had her perfect work," and left me. Besides, even Scripture does not say that one must go on offering oneself indefinitely to the smiters without resistance.

Perhaps one reason why I feel like "answering back" in this case is because I have so much liked Mr. Eaton's book, "The American Stage of Today," and look forward to an enlightening criticism from him—something that would encourage, no matter how severely it might censure. When two friends of his told me that he intended writing a criticism of "The Fear Market" I was much pleased. "Now I shall have some constructive criticism of my play," was my thought; "something that will show me where the faults are and how to mend them." This sort of criticism I call "growing pains."

"Faults" are the wounds of a friend, and criticism to be helpful should be always friendly, even when its friendliness is that of the surgeon's knife. And so cheerfully I took up Mr. Eaton's article in the EVENING LEDGER.

It began with large headlines that set forth a very bad pen in very bad taste, and it went on in the usual patronizing and facetious vein of newspaper criticism to which I have grown accustomed. He speaks of the plot of the play as "Princess Troubatkov's plotting," which he condemned for lack of plausibility. This lack of plausibility he sets forth in an example as follows:

"For instance, the editor of the silly paper will not let his daughter read his publication, for he loves her and doesn't want her to find out what his business is. She, however, consumed with curiosity, is living at a house where the newsstand. But, of course, if she weren't told by her lover, the doubtless lawyer (sic) who is exposing her father, what the business is, the play would have to be all rewritten."

Now, from these comments one interesting, if regrettable fact, stands forth—the fact that Mr. Eaton believes that no girl is capable of keeping a promise. If the least temptation fall in her way, Sylvia (the girl in my play) has promised her father not to read a copy of his paper until he gives her permission. When I was a girl I made my father promises which I kept, though it was hard to keep some of them, and I am glad to say that the girls I know then and the girls I know now have also the sense of honor which would keep them from breaking such promises.

Besides, Sylvia has lived in Italy since she was 5 years old, and even if she were such a little wretch as to want only opportunity in order to break her word, such papers as that which Mr. Eaton alludes to as the "old Town Topics" are unknown in Italy. I speak with authority, for I have spent six months of almost every

### The Juliet Shelby That I Know

By Mary Miles Minter

I don't think I shall ever become very conciliated, because every time I start to be I get a hard knock. Either the director takes it out of me or my mother lectures me, so that whenever I am inclined to think well of myself I can be sure there's a puncture coming.

You probably don't believe a word about my age. I always hesitate about it, but when any one asks me, because it sounds as though I were proud of it, but in reality I'm not. I have always felt old, never younger than 12. Even when I was much younger than I am now I could always sit up and converse with much older people. It seems to be a family trait, and isn't due to any effort on my part, so why should I take any credit for it?

Register despair. Mother tells me to "cultivate repose of manner," but it doesn't do any good. I have to keep moving all the time. Somebody once tried to compliment me by saying that it denoted temperament, but that's silly. I guess it's just nervousness. I'm that way mentally, too. Of course, I work pretty hard at the studio, and then I tutor in lots of things, including French and German, and what little time is left I spend out of doors if possible.

This winter I've done lots of coasting on that hill, and I'm strong enough to take the boys' sleds away from them which is lots of fun, because it makes them so angry. You don't know how strong I am. You see, I'm crazy about Juliet, and I have been taking lessons in it for some time. Also I like to box, because then I have an excuse to wave my arms about as much as I want to.

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### "Heads, I Am a Doctor; Tails, I Am a Singer"

By MARGUERITE BERTSCH

In one of O. Henry's most remarkable and curious stories he narrates the adventures of a young man who reached his destiny by three separate roads. Few are given that unusual privilege of taking three chances at their destiny; most of us have but one, and that one is a severe enough test of our discretion. John Charles Thomas, who is at present appearing with great success in "Alone at Last," which comes to the Lyric Theatre for a limited engagement, beginning Monday, April 17, realizing he had but one road to travel to his destiny, chose it by the simple and primitive method of tossing a coin. Which procedure, as the vernacular has it, was "parading the buck" to fate. Thus it came about that from the precise moment that the head of a half-dollar landed downward, John Charles Thomas began his career as a singer instead of a doctor of medicine. Previous to this important and portentous moment, Mr. Thomas had sung and had combed the pines of the "Materia Medica" so that he was prepared to greet either side of the coin.

However, Thomas would have been sorely disappointed had heads turned up, for it was his ardent desire from the time he was in the choir of his father's church in a small town in Pennsylvania to become a singer. He had only taken up medicine at his father's solicitation and entered on his studies in a half-hearted manner. Moreover, at this time the annual competition for a scholarship to the Peabody Institute, Baltimore, was being held. Thomas entered with 60 others and won out, which was *quod erat demonstrandum* of placing one's confidence in the flipping of a coin. Since graduating from the Peabody Institute Thomas has sung himself through a half dozen productions, rolling up success in each succeeding one like a small boy rolls up a huge snowball. One could almost say that Thomas had reached the pinnacle of success when he climbs the summit of the Juniperus every night, as Baron Frong in "Alone at Last," but Thomas would promptly discourage any such statement, for he is very ambitious and determined to scale heights equally as high in the musical world.

### The Third Generation of Drew

By MARGUERITE BERTSCH

The third generation of the Drew family, so far as the American stage is concerned, is represented by Louise Drew, whose genuine distinction as a comedienne may be gauged by her sparkling impersonation of the bogus French woman in "It Pays to Advertise."

The first of the Drews was John, senior, who came from Dublin and made his American debut in New York just 70 years ago. The son in time followed brilliantly in his father's footsteps, Louise, his daughter, made her debut in her father's company in 1902. She was educated in Notre Dame Academy in Philadelphia.

### How Griffith, the Wizard of the Photoplay, Works

The Producer of "The Birth of a Nation" Has His Own Novel Methods, One of Which Is Quietness

THE methods of the man who made "The Birth of a Nation," who is D. W. Griffith, are of great interest to all who keep space with what is done in the movie world. Not long ago some visitors were allowed in his theatre, and give this account of what they saw under the director-general in his own big workshop. "My boy, he's a living wonder—the nearest thing to infallible that this game has produced. He knows every scene in all the ten plays constantly in production, he sees every set, he knows every player, he passes on every foot of film. And yet he encourages the greatest possible originality from everybody and never wants any of the credit—or the limelight."

But we found something else, and we had to come to it bit by bit during the three days we kept watch for the director-general in his own big workshop. These scenes we saw being made, these plays we saw coming into being, scene by scene, might or might not be produced directly under the director-general's eye. He might not go fitting from set to set all day long, as we had expected. But he was actually present in an even more complete and effective way. The Griffith ideals, the Griffith methods, the Griffith standards—these were the ideals and methods and standards of every one on the lot. He had done more than stamp an art will, his genius; more even than select an art train to high efficiency a corps of workers—he had created a living, responsive and highly individualized organism for creative production.

We began to get a glimmer of what "Griffith Supervised" really means. It was our third day of watchful waiting and we had begun to receive casual recognition as some undefined part of the institution. The agile arm-waving person in shirt sleeves had not appeared, but we had seen and recognized many celebrities of the footlights and screen and were making mental notes on the rest. One individual had attracted our attention because of his odd behavior.

"That tall, forceful-looking actor in the gray Norfolk suit," we commented to a neighbor, "seems to keep to himself a lot. He goes wandering through with that big man and talking, but he never looks around. We haven't seen him in make-up these three days and we don't remember his face on the screen. Nobody pays any attention to him, but he looks like somebody. What's his name?"

"Name!" exclaimed our neighbor, grinning at us, "his name's Griffith!"

We stand among the quiet watchers behind the battery of cameras. Here are directors and assistant directors, operators and their assistants, players off duty or waiting for their entrance into the scene. Occasionally a bit of vigorous, high pitched dialogue from a set marks sharply the recording of some intense moment in a play where the use of speech will help the players to an accentuation of dramatic values, but for the most part voices are subdued to ordinary conversational tones.

There is none of the traditional shouting of directors—no fine frenzy at all. These are Griffith directions—they are speech during the actual taking of a scene about as much as the leader of a symphony orchestra at a final rehearsal. A director is arguing with a somewhat self-assertive player.

"Well, you know, Mr. Griffith liked it better done that way," he says, and the argument is ended.

We get it in bits like that every few minutes, and all the while we have our eye open for an extraordinarily agile man in shirt sleeves whom we expect to see come tearing across the stage, waving hands full of script and volleying orders (and probably imprecations) like a human cyclone. Oh! we're sure we'll know him—when he comes, nobody volleys and no arms are waved. This might all be a drawing room scene if it were not for the motley of costumes and the blaring of the California sun over the scene. There is a little subdued laughter among the gathered knots of players behind the cameras and over there a group of women and girls—some in critical and ruffled, another in modish evening dress and still another in the short riding skirt of the plains—are working on embroidery and—talking about D. W. Griffith.

"He seldom seems to see any one," says a veteran of the studios, "unless he has business to speak of. But he sees everything and seems to know everything. They say he is the quickest and surest judge of character ever. Just one glance and—he has your number."

This is disconcerting. We still are impulsive to escape while there is yet time, and begin to ask questions. We ask the same sort of questions of players and carpenters and cameramen and even of

directors. What sort of man is this Griffith, who so invariably resembles a general on a modern battlefield, with his fingers constantly on a hundred communication lines—and his person in an inviolable dugout miles away? The answer varies only in the wording. "This is a typical example."

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The graceful and finished dancer who comes to Keith's next week.



MARIE ATKINS In "Bringing Up Father," at the Walnut next week.

### FILMING AMERICA'S MOST FAMOUS ARTISTS IN SILHOUETTE



C. Allan Gilbert invented the silhouette movies now distributed by the Paramount. So what more natural than that Mr. Gilbert should bring his fellow artists and writers into the picture? From left to right, you can trace the outlines of Mr. Gilbert, James Montgomery Flagg, Owen Johnson, James Forbes, Mrs. Flagg, Mrs. Johnson, Irvin Cobb, Margaret Mayo and Edgar Selwyn.